

Mayor Scott Avedisian today offered his congratulations to Finance Director Ernest Zmyslinski, who last night received the Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council's 2009 Robert M. Goodrich Distinguished Public Service Award. The honor was bestowed during RIPEC's 66th annual meeting, which was attended by an audience of over 400, comprised of the state's business, government and community leaders.

"All of us who have the pleasure of working with Ernie are very proud of him and so pleased to see him honored in such a way," Avedisian said. "Ernie works extremely hard for the people of Warwick and is certainly deserving of this honor."

In a release RIPEC issued, Paul Twidale, chairwoman of the public service award selection committee noted that Zmyslinski and Jennifer Wood (who received the Gary Sasse Distinguished Service Award) "represent the integrity, devotion and day-to-day commitment that too often goes unrecognized in the public sector."

"I'd like to thank the members of the Finance and Treasury departments for all the work they do for the city every day," Zmyslinski said. "Any accomplishments we have is due to their dedication and hard work. They deserve the award as much as I do, if not more."

In his letter nominating Zmyslinski for the award, Avedisian cited his work in helping the city to withstand mid-year, unanticipated cuts from the state, his efforts as a part of a negotiating team that secured new union contracts that will save \$9.7 million over the agreements' lifetime, and his continued vigilance over department budgets.

"Throughout my tenure as Mayor, and my previous service as City Councilman, I have been consistently and deeply impressed with the scope of Ernie's knowledge, dedication and tireless efforts to keep city departments within – or under – budget," Avedisian wrote. "While he relies on traditional finance practices to maintain the city's fiscal health, he is also constantly researching other communities' innovations in cost-saving measures to better serve our taxpayers....Ernie has been instrumental in helping my administration maintain a level of fiscal health and conservatism that other communities, unfortunately, do not currently enjoy. Since 2000, when I became Mayor, we have continually posted surpluses, have seen our bond rating upgraded and saw the sale of general obligation bonds at very favorable interest rates."

Avedisian also cited Zmyslinski's leadership abilities: "In addition, Ernie's staff has received Certificates of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the GFOA. Our Tax Collector/Assessor, whose office falls under Ernie's direction, was recently awarded a prestigious award from his peers. All of this demonstrates Ernie's quiet leadership and the level of excellence he inspires in others."

Zmyslinski has served as the City of Warwick's Finance Director since June 1999. Prior to that, he was the Town Manager for the Town of Westerly for six years, and served as the assistant city manager and the chief executive officer for the Town of Norwich, CT for four years before that. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, as well as Master degrees in Public

Administration and Political Science, which he earned at Harvard University and Bowling Green State University, respectively.

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Contact: Sue Baker  
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